

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7160
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SANA
USMISSION USUN

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E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UR, ET, SO
SUBJECT: EMBASSY COMMENT ON MENGISTU VISIT DOCUMENTS

REF: MOSCOW 6260

SUMMARY: MENGISTU VISIT COMMUNIQUE AND DECLARATION ON FUNDAMENTALS OF RELATIONS EMPHASIZE SOVIET INTENTION TO CONTINUE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL AROUND RELATIONSHIP WITH ETHIOPIA BUT ALSO INDICATE SOVIET HOPE THAT THIS CAN BE DONE WHILE KEEPING SOMALIA IN THE "PROGRESSIVE" FOLD. END SUMMARY.

1. MAY 9 PRAVDA CARRIES TEXT OF SOVIET-ETHIOPIAN COMMUNIQUE
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AND DECLARATION ON FUNDAMENTALS OF RELATIONS. COMMUNIQUE NOTES SIGNING OF THREE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS: PROTOCOL ON ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION, AGREEMENT ON CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC-COOPERATION, AND CONSULAR CONVENTION.

2. BOTH THE COMMUNIQUE AND THE DECLARATION EMPHASIZE TWO POINTS; THE CONTINUED COOPERATION OF THE SOVIET UNION AND

ETHIOPIA IN THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC "AND OTHER" (READ MILITARY) SPHERES; AND THE IMPORTANCE OF UNITY OF ALL PROGRESSIVE FORCES IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST VARIOUS EVILS. THE LATTER WE INTERPRET AS AN EXPRESSION OF MOSCOW'S CONTINUED HOPE THAT IT CAN CONSOLIDATE ITS POSITION IN ETHIOPIA WHILE KEEPING SOMALIA IN THE PROGRESSIVE CAMP.

3. WHILE WE DO NOT YET KNOW WHAT MESSAGE THE SOVIETS WILL SEND PRIVATELY TO THE SOMALIS TO REASSURE THEM ABOUT THE FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF SOVIET-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS, THE SIGNALS IN THIS REGARD IN THE DECLARATION AND THE COMMUNIQUE SEEM TO BE OF A TWO-FOLD NATURE. ON THE ONE HAND THERE ARE THE USUAL STATEMENTS FOUND IN SUCH DOCUMENTS CALLING FOR THE UNITY OF PEACE-LOVING FORCES AND MOVEMENTS AND EXPRESSING SOVIET AND ETHIOPIAN INTENTION TO DEVELOP RELATIONS WITH OTHER PEACE-LOVING STATES. IN THE CONTEXT OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HORN, HOWEVER, THESE VAGUE STATEMENTS SEEM TO US TO BE DIRECTED SPECIFICALLY TOWARD SOMALIA. THIS INTERPRETATION IS SUPPORTED BY THE COMMUNIQUE PASSAGE EMPHASIZING THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRIENDSHIP AND GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES OF THE HORN SERVES THE INTERESTS OF THE "PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT" OF ALL THE STATES OF THIS REGION.

4. THIS IS FOLLOWED BY PASSAGES IN THE COMMUNIQUE WHICH CONDEMN ATTEMPTS BY IMPERIALIST AND OTHER REACTIONARY CIRCLES TO INCREASE TENSION IN NORTH-EASTERN AFRICA. THE TWO SIDES (REPEATING THE LINE TAKEN BY BOTH PPDGORNY AND MENGISTU IN THEIR MAY 4 SPEECHES - REFTEL) EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RED SEA AS AN INTERNATIONAL WATERWAY, AND OPPOSED ATTEMPTS

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BY "SOME" COUNTRIES TO ESTABLISH CONTROL OVER THE RED SEA. THUS WHILE NOT MENTIONING SOMALIA BY NAME OR EVEN BY IMPLICATION, MOSCOW SEEMINGLY GIVES SOMALIA THE CHOICE OF REMAINING IN THE PROGRESSIVE CAMP AND SHARING IN THE ECONOMIC AND MILITARY LARGESS WHICH FLOWS FROM FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, OR OF SIDING WITH THE FORCES OF IMPERIALISM AND REACTION WHICH ARE ATTEMPTING TO CONTROL THE RED SEA REGION "IN VIOLATION OF THE LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF OTHER STATES AND PEOPLES...AND ALSO IN HARM TO INTERESTS OF INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING."

5. COMMUNIQUE CLEARLY PUTS SOVIET IMPRIMATUR ON PMAC'S ATTEMPT TO BRING ABOUT "PROGRESSIVE TRANSFORMATION" OF ETHIOPIAN SOCIETY. INDEED, THE COMMUNIQUE DECLARES THAT AS A RESULT OF THIS TRANSFORMATION AND "CHANGES" IN ETHIOPIA, THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING SOVIET-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS A "QUALITATIVELY NEW CHARACTER." SOVIET SIDE'S EXPRESSION OF "SOLIDARITY" WITH EFFORTS OF ETHIOPIAN LEADERSHIP IN DEFENSE OF REVOLUTIONARY ACHIEVEMENTS IS A FAIRLY STRONG STATEMENT PARTICULARLY GIVEN

THE MURDERS CARRIED OUT BY THE "LEADERSHIP" JUST THREE MONTHS
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6. THERE SEEMS TO US TO BE A CERTAIN CAUTION IN THE DOCUMENTS
WITH REGARD TO THE ERITREAN PROBLE AND THE FUTURE OF DJIBOUTI.
WHEREAS BOTH PODGORNY AND MENGISTU HAD SPOKEN HARSHLY AND AT
SOME LENGTH ABOUT ATTEMPTS TO SEPARATE ERITRIA FROM ETHIOPIA,
THE DECLARATION SIMPLY REFERRED (ALBEIT TWICE) TO THE IMPORTANCE
OF "TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY", AND THE COMMUNIQUE SAID ONLY THAT
THE SOVIET SIDE SUPPORTED PMAC MEASURES TO ACHIEVE A "DEMOCRATIC
SOLUTION TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE
RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF ALL PEOPLES OF THE COUNTRY." THE
COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE ON DJIBOUTI WAS EVEN MORE CAUTIOUS, STATING
THAT THE TWO SIDES CONFIRM THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE OF DJIBOUTI
TO INDEPENDENCE ON THE BASIS OF RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS.

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7. WE ALSO NOTE THE EMPHASIS IN BOTH THE DECLARATION AND THE COMMUNIQUE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF RECONSTRUCTING THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER. TO BE SURE, MOSCOW INSERTS ITS OWN DEFINITION OF THIS INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER; IT IS INTERESTING NONETHELESS TO SEE MOSCOW BEGIN TO MENTION THIS ISSUE, PERHAPS AS A RESULT OF THE EMPHASIS PLACE ON IT BY PODGORNY'S HOSTS DURING HIS RECENT TRIP TO TANZANIA, ZAMBIA, AND MOZAMBIQUE. IT IS NOTE-WORTHY THAT NO SUCH REFERENCE APPEARS IN THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES OF RELATIONS SIGNED BY SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE AND THE SOVIET UNION IN OCTOBER 1976.

8. WHILE WE HAVE NO INSIDE INFORMATION ON ATMOSPHERE OF TALKS, WE NOTE A DISTINCT WARMING OF THE RELATIONSHIP DURING THE VISIT-ESPECIALLY INDICATED BY BREZHNEV'S MEETING WITH MENGISTU (ATTENDED BY SOVIET MIN DEF, MARSHALL USTINOV)- CULMINATING IN THE DESCRIPTION IN THE COMMUNIQUE OF THE ATMOSPHERE OF "FRIENDSHIP, AND COMPLETE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING." THIS MAY REPRESENT A CERTAIN DEGREE OF SUCCESS ON THE PART OF MENGISTU, WHO, DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS BELIEVE, CAME ON HIS OWN INVITATION IN ORDER TO INSURE A GREATER SOVIET COMMITMENT TO HIS CAUSE. REAL SUCCESS WILL BE DETERMINED BY WHAT THE SOVIETS ACTUALLY DO FOR ETHIOPIA IN THE WAY OF ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SUPPORT. WHILE THE SIGNALS FROM THE VISIT ARE POSITIVE IN THIS REGARD, THE SOVIETS STILL HAVE NOT INDICATED THAT THEY HAVE GIVEN UP ON THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMALIA. IF THAT IS THE CASE, THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO SHOW SOME RESTRAINT IN BUILDING UP THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PMAC, PARTICULARLY THE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, AND CAN ALSO BE EXPECTED TO ALMOST SERIOUSLY TO THE SOMALIS SOON ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH MOGADISCIO. JUDGING FROM THE LANGUAGE OF THE DECLARATION AND THE COMMUNIQUE, MOSCOW HAS INTENSIFIED ITS DILEMMA RATHER THAN EASED IT.

9. HOWEVER, A SLIGHTLY CONTRARY VIEW WAS FORCEFULLY PRESENTED TO AN EMBOFF BY THE EGYPTIAN AND SUDANESE AMBASSADORS ON MAY 6. THE TWO FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT THE SOVIETS, KNOWING FULL WELL THAT

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THEY COULD NOT MAINTAIN A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH BOTH ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA, HAD ALREADY OPTED FOR ADDIS ABABA DUE TO ETHIOPIA'S STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AS WELL AS THE INCREASED POSSIBILITIES A "PROGRESSIVE" ETHIOPIA WOULD PRESENT FOR INCREASING PRESSURE ON SUDAN AND EGYPT.

10. THE WESTERN WIRE SERVICES HAVE ALREADY REPORTED THE APPARENT ANTI-MENGISTU STUDENT DEMONSTRATION IN THE ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY ON MAY 6. DETAILS ARE STILL NOT KNOWN HERE BUT AN EMBOFF

WHO DROVE PAST THE ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY DURING THE AFTERNOON OF MAY 6
SA APPROXIMATELY 75 UNIFORMED MILITIAMEN AND 25 PLAINCLOTHES
POLICE IN A VACANT LOT NEAR THE EMBASSY. ONE AMBULANCE WAS LEAVING
THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE EMBASSY AND TWO OTHERS WERE IN A SIDE
STREET NEARBY. THE EMBASSY DRIVER SAID THAT THE POLICE HAD BEEN
THERE SINCE EARLY MORNING.

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